

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

Sub A

1. A method for initiation of an agreement utilizing a network, comprising the steps of:
allowing a buyer and a seller to negotiate terms of trade utilizing a network;
receiving from the buyer a form indicating the terms of trade utilizing the network;
receiving an identifier from the buyer utilizing the network;
sending the form to a bank for assessing the credit of the buyer utilizing the network, wherein the bank to which the credit application is sent is based on the identifier;
forwarding the form to a seller along with the assessment of the credit of the buyer utilizing the network;
allowing the seller to digitally sign the form utilizing the network;
receiving the digitally signed form from the seller utilizing the network; and
transmitting a notice to the buyer indicating that the digitally signed form has been received from the seller, thus initiating the agreement.

Sub B

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the network includes a wide area network.

1 3. A method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising the step of
2 authenticating an identity of the buyer prior to sending the form to the bank.

1 4. A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the identity is authenticated by
2 requiring the submission of an identifier and a password.

1 5. A method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising the step of verifying
2 the credit of the seller.

A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for initiation of an agreement utilizing a network, comprising:

- 3 (a) a code segment for allowing a buyer and a seller to negotiate terms of trade
4 utilizing a network;

5 (b) a code segment for receiving from the buyer a form indicating the terms of
6 trade utilizing the network;

7 (c) a code segment for receiving an identifier from the buyer utilizing the
8 network;

9 (d) a code segment for sending the form to a bank for assessing the credit of the
10 buyer utilizing the network, wherein the bank to which the credit application
11 is sent is based on the identifier;

12 (e) a code segment for forwarding the form to a seller along with the assessment
13 of the credit of the buyer utilizing the network;

14 (f) a code segment for allowing the seller to digitally sign the form utilizing the
15 network;

16 (g) a code segment for receiving the digitally signed form from the seller
17 utilizing the network; and

18 (h) a code segment for transmitting a notice to the buyer indicating that the
19 digitally signed form has been received from the seller, thus initiating the
20 agreement.

- 1 8. A computer program as recited in claim 7, wherein the network includes a
2 wide area network.

- 1 9. A computer program as recited in claim 7, and further comprising a code
2 segment for authenticating an identity of the buyer prior to sending the form
3 to the bank.

- 1 10. A computer program as recited in claim 9, wherein the identity is
2 authenticated by requiring the submission of an identifier and a password.
- 1 11. A computer program as recited in claim 7, and further comprising a code
2 segment for verifying the credit of the seller.
- 1 12. A computer program as recited in claim 7, wherein the form is a combined
2 purchase order/proforma invoice.
- 1 13. A system for initiation of an agreement utilizing a network, comprising:
2 (a) logic for allowing a buyer and a seller to negotiate terms of trade utilizing a
3 network;
4 (b) logic for receiving from the buyer a form indicating the terms of trade
5 utilizing the network;
6 (c) logic for receiving an identifier from the buyer utilizing the network;
7 (d) logic for sending the form to a bank for assessing the credit of the buyer
8 utilizing the network, wherein the bank to which the credit application is sent
9 is based on the identifier;
10 (e) logic for forwarding the form to a seller along with the assessment of the
11 credit of the buyer utilizing the network;
12 (f) logic for allowing the seller to digitally sign the form utilizing the network;
13 (g) logic for receiving the digitally signed form from the seller utilizing the
14 network; and
15 (h) logic for transmitting a notice to the buyer indicating that the digitally signed
16 form has been received from the seller, thus initiating the agreement.
- 1 14. A system as recited in claim 13, wherein the network includes a wide area
2 network.
- 1 15. A system as recited in claim 13, and further comprising logic for
2 authenticating an identity of the buyer prior to sending the form to the bank.

- C1*
- 1 16. A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the identity is authenticated by
2 requiring the submission of an identifier and a password.
- C2*
- 1 17. A system as recited in claim 13, and further comprising logic for verifying
2 the credit of the seller.
- C3*
- 1 18. A system as recited in claim 13, wherein the form is a combined purchase
2 order proforma invoice.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100